



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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subject, that it is unnecessary to enumerate the birds that may now be seen.

Boys are exceedingly quick in learning all about them, easily telling the note, flight, or plumage of those they find in the neighbourhood of their homes.

This month our students will carefully notice and record any birds or nests, plants, shells or insects they can discover in their walks at Ambleside.

It is hardly possible to take up a magazine without finding much useful information on Natural History, which might easily be read and stored up for future use; and we hope those of our students who are at work in various parts of the country, will bear this in mind.

Natural History is a subject of vast interest, and one which grows upon one rapidly, when once it is taken up.

Any of the old students who would like to join the House of Education Naturalist Society, may send in their names to the Secretary.

BOOKS.

"En hoexkens ende boexkens."

Clues to Holy Writ, a scheme for studying the whole Bible in its historical order in three years, by Mary L. G. Petrie, B.A. (3s. 6d., Hodder & Stoughton).—For the last ten years, a most admirable work has been carried on without any flourish of trumpets by Miss Petrie. She originated the *College by Post*, in answer to a request for help, which reached her in her own college days. This remarkable work began with "an informal correspondence with two or three other girls, whose schoolroom days were over." Its object is to help girls isolated from educational advantages, and Miss Petrie has succeeded in enrolling a staff of two hundred able teachers, educated at the several women's colleges, who give their work gratuitously. No fewer than three thousand students have entered the classes of the *College by Post*, and "since the most important history, the noblest literature, and the highest knowledge, should always come first, every one of our students undertakes to give half-an-hour a day to Bible study on some regular system." It was in the conduct of this great work, that it occurred to Miss Petrie that the most intelligent and profitable method of studying the Bible is to read it in the chronological order of the events it relates, and the books it contains, so far as that can be ascertained. This idea she embodied in a marvellously helpful series of pamphlets, which have been going about the world, since 1887, under the title of the *Chronological Scripture Cycle*. Readers of all conditions and ages, who got hold of these pamphlets, found in them the wise guidance to the actual study of the Bible, which so many have looked for in vain. It is these pamphlets which have now been published under the title of *Clues to Holy Writ*. We cannot imagine a more useful volume, or one better deserving a place on the bookshelves of every Christian family. Miss Petrie's training leads her to approach the study of the Scriptures as she would that of any other literature. She gives exactly the hints, helps, clues, classification, notes, which the cultivated mind craves, and must needs be sadly at sea in the study of the Bible without.

But it is culture rather than exegetical scholarship that Miss Petrie brings to the work, and—must we own it?—a middleman* is rather welcome who will present to us the severe labours of the scholar, transmitted, as it were, through the medium of a cultivated mind. The laborious research to which the *Clues* testify, give the volume unusual value. Culture and wide reading are not the only qualifications Miss Petrie has brought to this work. It is the tone of assured conviction, the easy, unanxious movement of one who knows his guide and enjoys his journey, that makes the Bible studies, presented by

Miss Petrie, as fascinating as they are helpful. The outlines of her scheme are very simple.

She has found that half-an-hour's study a day will enable the student to go intelligently through the chronological cycle of the Scriptures in three years, of three terms each. The first term is occupied with the study of the *Days of the Patriarchs*, the second, with the *Days of Moses*, and so on, till the ninth term, which is employed on the study of the *Days of St. Paul*.

A list of the headings of chapters for a single term will give some idea of the admirable and reasonable arrangement Miss Petrie presents. *The Days of Moses*: (1) General Summary; (2) Books to be Read; (3) Periods and Dates; (4) Geography; (5) Heroes; (6) the Coming Messiah; (7) God's Revelation of Himself to Man; (8) Man's Relation to God in Worship; (9) Questions on the Term's Work, which includes Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Psalm xc., Joshua, Judges i. to v., and xvii.-xxi., Ruth (136 chapters) to be read in four months. This is the sort of lucid remark that one finds scattered on almost every page of the book: "We are apt to estimate the days after Joshua by those closing episodes of Judges. . . . Three-quarters of the whole period seem, however, to have passed in peace and prosperity, which has little history, but which has beautiful illustration in the story of Ruth." Or again, "The Israelites fought not only for themselves, but for us. Just as the intellectual progress of mankind depended upon the victory of Greece at Marathon, so the future of morality and religion for the whole race depended upon the victory of Israel at Beth-horon." We cannot wish better for the households in which the *Parents' Review* is cherished than that they should diligently follow Miss Petrie's lead, and give a daily half-hour to what they will find a delightful as well as infinitely profitable study. Anyway, would it be too much that the readings at family prayers should be illuminated by the insight which a little previous study of *Clues* would certainly give to the reader? A work of this nature, which no way takes up the defensive, is the best sort of defence for the sacred documents of the Christian.

Those of our readers who have delighted in the exquisite stories which have appeared from time to time in the pages of the *Parents' Review*—*The Man with the Seven Hearts*, *The Church of the Hunted Stag*, *The Castaway*, *The Reed in the River*—will hail with pleasure the dainty volume entitled, *The Man with the Seven Hearts* (the seven little hearts dotted about the cover, published by Elliot Stock). Mr. Burrell has done well to collect these sketches; they have more than a passing value. It is not too much to say that they are an addition to our national literature.

The new stories in the volume, the *Ending of the Day*, especially, have the same half mystic fascination that we find in *The Castaway* and the *Man with the Seven Hearts*. Would it be possible, we wonder, to shut the book in the middle of one of these tales, as enchaining to grown ups as ever was fairy tale to a child? The sketches in the volume are very various—comical, critical, mystical—but they have certain qualities in common: first, a distinct literary flavour, which has a very exhilarating effect on the mind, and leaves you after reading with the warm sense of having been in good company; next, a quality which it is hard to define,

is its quaintness, uncommonness, genius? Anyway, it is pleasant, possibly the flavour of Attic salt. "The Casual's" story is very tender. The occasion of the stories is charmingly told thus:

"A VOUS DEUX."

"We three, do you remember? sat at ease,
While to the philosophic fire I told
My puzzle-tales. Without, the air bit cold,
The light flakes nestled on the deep-fringed trees,
Last Christmas-tide.

"The critic voices met me frank and free,
And yet you begged a volume. Nothing loth,
I send this sheaf of ten a gift to Both,
Another bond between my friends and me,
This Christmas-tide.

"Light fall the snowflakes of the coming years
Upon your heads; and through your kindly day,
Until you reach the 'Ending of the Way,'
May Life smile sweetly through her transient tears,
Each Christmas-tide.

"And if I tread a separate path, may He
To whom all paths are pointed, lead us on;
Friends will be gathered when the day is done,
And sometime, somewhere, we shall meet and see
His Christmas-tide."

The "Three," under the titles of the "Critic," the "Philosopher," and the "Reader," the Philosopher being the Critic's wife, and the Critic the Philosopher's husband, make charming appearances throughout the volume in the interludes between song and story, and to them is added the "Casual," who must introduce himself by his own story—nothing less would do him justice. We say in the interludes between song and story, because Mr. Arthur Burrell reveals in this volume another gift, an added grace—the matchless gift of song. Has not this, from the "Ending of the Way," the true ring?

"At the closing of the day, the gold has turned to gray,
And the workman is a-waiting for the bell;
He has done the best he may; let him put the tools away,
There are others that will handle them as well.
Yet stay,
Hear our greeting for the ending of the way."

Better still to our mind is the following, with its wistful child's gaze into the abysmal, its light touch upon the infinite, a thing to be *sung*, not said:

"Tell me the meaning of words,
From one to another thrown.
They lift the veil from a soul,
And each of us seeth his own;
But it hurrieth past.

"Tell me the meaning of life.
Is it to struggle and do,
To press through the battle-smoke,
To stand by a friend, and be true?
Oh, it fadeth fast.

"Tell me the meaning of death.
Is it the end of the day,
Or a doubtful forward step
When the trees hide the trend of the way,
And the sky's o'ercast?

"Tell me the meaning of love.
Naught but a light in the eyes,
Or the barter of soul for soul,
And the victor's only prize?
What else shall last?"

We are very glad that Mr. Arthur Burrell has been induced to attach his name to work which the *Spectator* (in connection with another and an unowned production), characterises as "surpassing."

Any mothers of sons who do not know it already will thank me for recommending *Schoolboy Morality* (Eliot Stock), a little book, or pamphlet, which approaches a most difficult subject with singular delicacy, helpfulness, and wisdom.

Many mothers write that Miss Miller's "Pussy Box" has been a great help in teaching their children to read. We are glad to be able to announce that a second little reading box has been prepared on the same lines. (Price 6d. A. Roche, 84, Lea High Road, S.E.)

THE "P.R." LETTER BAG.

[The Editor is not responsible for the opinions of correspondents.]

DEAR EDITOR,—In those of this month's magazines that I have yet had time to glance at, the article that struck me as most likely to be of interest to your readers was that by Professor Mahaffy, in the *Nineteenth Century*, on "Sham Education." Of course, it deals primarily with Irish schools, and perhaps equally, of course, the Professor has many shots at various enemies, political and other, but there were many passages that I marked strongly condemnatory of the evils of competitive examinations, payment by results, &c., and the damage done by them to true education and scholarship which, but for considerations of space, I should have been glad to quote.—Yours, &c.,
H. P.

DEAR EDITOR,—I shall be glad if you will put a notice in the next number of the *Parents' Review*, asking if any readers have for disposal the following Nos. of Vol. I.—viz., 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10. Also Vol. I. complete, either bound or unbound, and to let me know what they will take for them.

I see that in the American *Educational Review* for November is an article on "The Habitual Postures of School Children." This and other articles that I notice in the table of contents should be useful. Price 35 cents.—Yours, very faithfully,
H. P.

DEAR EDITOR,—May I ask in confidence the meaning of your editorial "P.S." to the January number? For if you think readers will suppose it is written from an "R. C." point of view, it might be well to append a note to the effect that the historian Griffis, from whose work, *Mikado's Empire* (the standard book on Japan), the principal facts were taken, is a *Protestant missionary* of many years standing, and his accounts are the most thrilling and touching imaginable of the steadfastness of those blessed children of the sunrise.

In the same way, the account of the Jesuits in Canada came from the Protestant Professor Parkman, and both narrations are simply *historical facts*, though coming from the opposite camp.
VERA.

[The Editor's note referred to the causes which led the gentle Japanese to turn on the missionaries they had so frankly welcomed]